The Charles Viewer

2006 - 2007

Fisher College
THE
CHARLES
VIEWER
DELUXE MODEL 5

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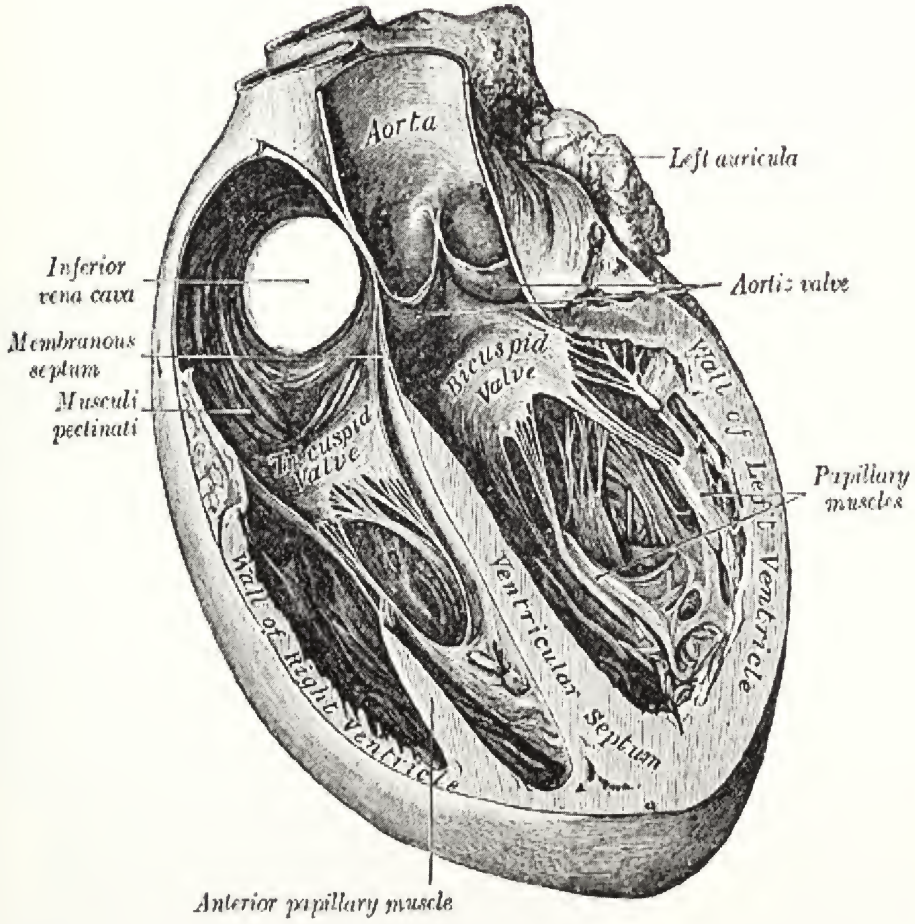
I. LOVE...


Aorta
Left auricula
Inferior vena cava
Aortic valve
Membranous septum
Musculi pectinati
Bicuspid Valve
Tricuspid Valve
Wall of Left Ventricle
Papillary muscles
Wall of Right Ventricle
Ventricular Septum
Anterior papillary muscle

My First Girlfriend

David Barakchian

My first crush was Elizabeth Reginela in the third grade. Prior to grade three my fear of catching cooties and other contagious girl related illnesses prevented me from having any interest in girls. But Elizabeth Reginela was different. She was worth the risk of cooties. She had a pale complexion with blonde hair, piercing blue eyes and a smile that could melt the heart of Hitler. We both went to a private school called South Shore Christian School. She went to my church as well, and that's where the saga begins.

I would like to be able to tell a tale of romance and lust. I would love to tell a tale of how her glowing personality and sense of humor won my heart. And I would like to be able to report how her kindness and caring for others was unlike any other girl. But in third grade I didn't know the definition of romance or lust and she was so shy she practically never spoke. So when I first met her in Sunday school class I liked her for many of the same reasons most guys like girls, because she was pretty and skinny.

For a week I stared at her from across the room of Mrs. Osterling's class and eventually mustered up the confidence to ask her to be my girlfriend. The idea of getting to know a girl wasn't my style in third grade because they liked to talk about Barbie's and makeup and I liked talking about Power Rangers and video games. So instead of getting acquainted with her then asking her out, I just went up to her during recess and said "Hi, I'm David, wanna be my girlfriend?" She tilted her head slightly to the right and looked me over as if she was a health inspector, and I was a restaurant kitchen. After five seconds of meticulous inspection she said, "OK." I was pretty happy but had nothing else to say so I just said ok back and went to play soccer.

It was a great relationship. We talked to each other when we could, held hands when we were together, and our parents thought we were the cutest things ever. We had play dates every weekend over the summer as our parents drank tea and gossiped about their friends. It was perfect. Then came my first kiss. At the beginning of 4th grade our school had a book sale in the gym. We walked around holding hands and I stopped to look

at a Dwight Gooden Mets poster. Then I heard her soft petite voice say my name, so I turned to her and the next thing I knew her lips were on mine. There was no forethought on my part, no contemplation, and no complications. It was plain and simple, just a kiss on the lips. All of this was new to my 4th grade mind. I had seen people kissing in movies but it never dawned on me that I could do it with Elizabeth. Until then she was a friend that I played with, but after that moment, she was my girlfriend.

We said nothing after just held hands and walked back to class after I bought my Mets poster. The next day she told me she was moving to Pennsylvania and a week later she was gone. I didn't think much of it in the week leading up to her departure, but it didn't sink in that she was gone until I had nobody to hold my hand. She left me all alone, cold and lonely in the treacherous world of fourth grade. Eventually I got over her loss with the help of a lot of video games and Power Rangers. But every once in while when I walk to class or buy a poster I remember my first crush and can't help but smile.

Untitled, N. McConvery

Writers Need Love Too

Class Collage

Hello my name is Tyler I have a dog.

Would you like to date me?

23 tall red-haired male seeking female must like space, Nintendo, wasting time, and Wikipedia.

It's the du, looking for a hot lil mamma holla at your boy. Keep it real.

Looking for an indecisive, danger-loving, beer-drinking, pasta-cooking, skinny-dipping, frog- kissing old maid.

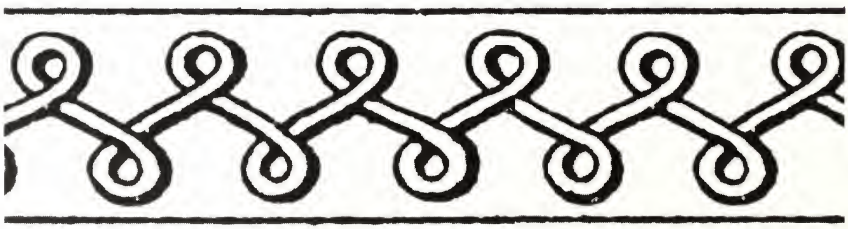
Single male looking to have a romantic dinner over a bowl of generic cereal with a woman.

Looking for pretty much anything I can get.

I'm beautiful, young, brave, and rich.

Looking for strapping single who longs for adventure.

Must be in touch with emotions and willing to hug it out.



Untitled

Kaleena Strelecki

Stop, smile, breathe, love

life and all the people around you.

The beach, the water, the sun, the fresh air

I just can't leave

It's my home, it's the people who matter most

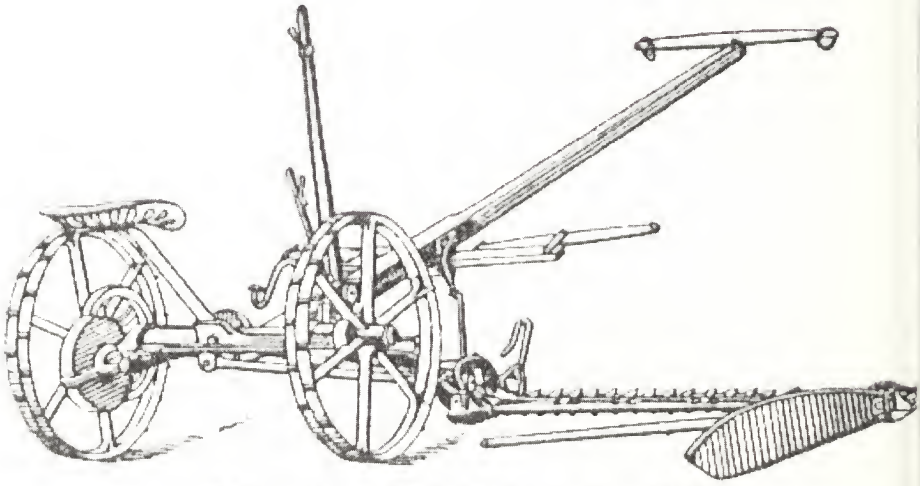
I have it all.

Family, friends, and loves bring positive

things to life.

Tulip, p. 2213.

II. ...AND ITS DISCONTENTS



Mowing Machine, p. 1416.

Untitled

Kaleena Strelecki

I sit here and wonder where

Where did you go? What did I do?

I tried, I never cried, I did my work

but still nothing was good enough?

I gave you my love. I opened my heart

for you.

And you still left.

No good bye, No note, just empty drawers

and my lonely tears. It's ok though.

Love comes and goes and only

the good ones stay. So this is my

Good bye.

Valentines: A Tribute to Originality

Class Collage

You and I have been
Friends for as long as
I can remember.
We go way back like George Jefferson's hairline.
You surprised me when you
told me you liked me.
I didn't like that way
so I rejected you.
but you dust yourself
off and tried again,
again, again, and again.
You made me want to
throw my cell phone out
the window. You nagged
me until I gave you
a chance, but
I just wasn't feeling you.
Time went by
I thought you forgot about me.
I missed you bothering me.

Dreamin

I was thinking of a day I was Day Dreaming
about a girl who knew my name. Tried to keep my
eyes off her because I know that's rude but it's harder said
than done in my case.
Forever, I shall see, the truth; 6.5, approximately 6.5 billion
people on earth, 54% women, the thought of meeting
the right one seems at point.
Maybe it's me, maybe it's them. Who knows who cares.

~

I sit here and wonder where....
Where did you go? What did I do?
I tried, I never cried, I did my work
But still nothing was good enough?
I gave you my love, I opened my heart
For you.
And you still left.
No good-bye, no note, just empty draws
And my lonely tears, it's ok though.
Love comes and goes and only
The good ones stay. So this is my good-bye

By Your Side

Chris Mattox

I remember standing by her, regardless of her decision. I felt I wanted this to happen, I felt as though I was ready. I even worked up enough courage to withstand the ridicule I'd received from both my parents, both of them. It felt as though I was alone in the matter. Even my brother, with three kids, gave me advice to be happy with her final decision. But still I couldn't accept it. For the three months, that I knew, I had mentally prepared myself to accept her decision. We even went out looking for apartments. The first complex we looked at was called the Chocolate Factory. "This is nice, I love it baby." Her reaction to the place was comparable to my feeling about the price. It was so close to happening. It was too good to be true.

Destiny began to catch up with us. The arguments grew louder, and our tears ran more frequently. We were different. Two opposites. I was the positive and she was the negative. My father always told me to find one that isn't exactly like you, and I did. She was so perfect, and I was not. Even then, it seemed like only a matter of time before we would call it quits. Her pregnancy marked the last chapter of our story. It seemed inevitable to break apart after watching her slowly exit the front of the building of the clinic and into the front seat of my car. She was noticeably quiet, which was unlike her, unless she had something deep on her mind. Right after, we drove to an animal shelter because I knew it would cheer her up slightly, and it did. Momentarily, we seemed normal; but far from happy.

Untitled

Mina Cho

"I hate you," I exclaimed as I couldn't hold it anymore. I didn't mean what I said but I had to say something. He looks back at me with anger and disappointment. "What did you just say?" I said, "I don't even know why I am with you, cause I hate you." He is in shock, I can tell. "How could you say such a thing to me? Are you serious?" I told him yes and he takes out a cigarette and smokes away. He stands in the living room near the window, looking outside. His face is all crinkled like a wrinkled shirt that badly needs ironing. We've been doing this for 4 years. I give the meanest look I can, which I have been told, is chilling. He inhales faster and deeper than usual, as if that was helping him forget. It was about to come out, and I had no way to hold it. Even though I knew I would be back in his arms no later than tonight, I said it. "I can't do this anymore." And there, I felt nothing. I didn't even feel a bit sad. As I look at his puppy face tearing up, I say sorry.

Untitled, N. McConvery

Untitled

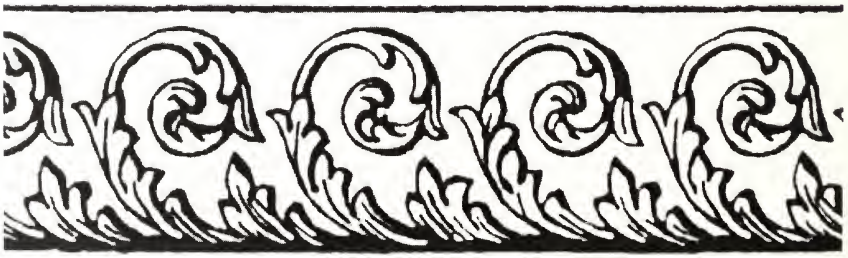
Tekia Moore

Unshakable but took a shook
Unbreakable but take a look
We're starting to fall apart
Where's our faith, where's our heart
We yearned to say those special words
You spoke them yet I never heard
The emotion hidden underneath
I stole you like a common thief
Your heart was there for the taking
I never thought twice as to what I was making
No bad can come from jumping right in
Except I got bored yet once again
I should have just told you how I felt
At least if you knew we could have dealt
But I just got distant and never around
I was always "busy" nowhere to be found
Cowing behind my answering machine
Cause telling the truth would only be mean
Well I hurt you more by acting like that
And now I lost you and you'll never come back

Obsession

Marquis Massie

Lost in translation of the thoughts I might have had.
Continuously finding myself pondering why this is bad.
Bad for my soul and bad for my heart.
But has it been an obsession from the start? You were
uniquely different and possess somethin' many don't see.
Can you honestly say that you don't feel for me?
Any time of the day, any day of the week.
I'm caught in a daze, listenin' to the way you speak.
Intrigued by your demeanor and your physique.
Your sexuality has been nothin' less than
somethin' quite mystique.
Am I unfortunately lost in an obsession???



The Bridge Is Over

Vayola Vilma

And when he left, he was gone
With all his old jazz records, his cuff links, and his cigarette from the mantel
He had dressed in a simple blouse
With shoes that exited my home softly, but enough for me to hear
I sat and dreamt of being his again
Letting him kiss my flesh
And tickle my soul
And do pretty things to me
Now that I'm alone, I am left with his essence
I smell his aftershave in my towels
And his body in my sheets
I will succumb to the loneliness inching closer to me
Since he has made and unmade me again
I will sit here
now
in this room
And wait for morning turn to night and morning and back again
Maybe tomorrow I will speak softly
And the day after, I may smile
And then later, I will love again
But I will remember the words he said
They'll play in my mind every time I think of his grace
"I don't love you anymore, the bridge is over between you and I"
It could have been the way I cooked and cleaned
Or the beautiful women who made him smile in a way he used to smile at me
Or maybe it was nothing at all
I'll admit, maybe he does not have the same love for me anymore,
But I will preserve the bridge between his heart and mine

Elementary Feelings

Tekia Moore

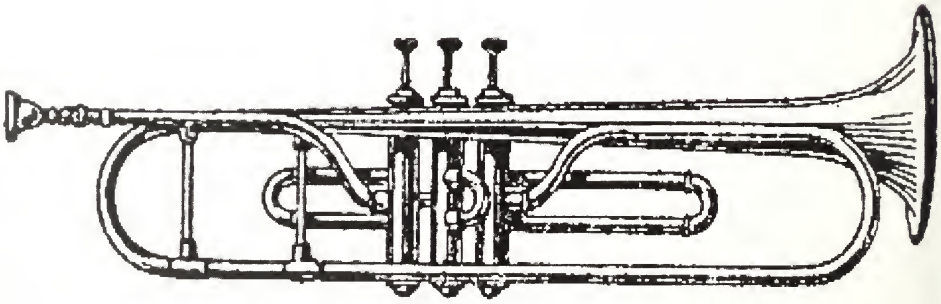
Can it ever be like it was back then?
Will we ever know those feelings again?
What was once so innocent and so pure
Are we bound to forget as we endure
the feelings that come with growing up
Such as heart-ache, pain, and empty love
In the past our feelings were always true
Being hurt could never happen to you
Teens were silly and adults were mad
Being a kid was all we had
Then everything went horribly awry
We weren't Peter Pan soaring the sky
Couldn't just fly off to never-never land
We had to have hopes, ambition, a plan
There wasn't any longer just you and me
Now there were feelings there never used to be
Whatever we thought, we could no longer say
Had to hold it in until you found the right way
So, can it ever be like it was back then?
I wish it could, but I don't think it can.

III. FAMILY MATTERS

Untitled

Laurie Nicolas

"Here are some boxes. Start packing what you don't use at the moment because by the end of the summer we're moving to Florida," my mother said to me and my siblings. None of us believed her, but why would she just make something like that up? We didn't start packing until mid-July. We were enjoying being home with friends and family. Time went by, and we were finally in Florida, the Sunshine State. As we drove to our destination I said to myself, how did my mother find out about this place? This place with no one hanging out in the streets. No corner stores, no parks, nor basketball courts, no one in sight, and no black people. This place where almost every house has a pool and a boat in the lake in the backyard. I knew we weren't poor but we weren't rich either. Though we seemed rich to other people, I never once thought we were rich when it came to material things. I knew we were rich when if came to having unconditional love and support from ever member of our family.



Unfamiliar Territory

Jamie Strickland

I see ghost of my past when I sleep
Waking up cold sweaty
Gasping for air
Holding my sheets
1-1-9 numbers never to remember
To familiar with the life I live
I found this support on the grounds that
My gun sings
Trapped in a maze
To let off or to raise my son
My son
The first born second to my streets
A heart's acappella
Singing praises
Wondering if I will ever breathe another day
Frigid hands
And unforgiving eyes
Lost before a first word
Before I could teach him
The values of life
Through the morals of my heritage
Damning his life
To two choices
Slanging rocks
And banging on the block
And taking the precious moments
From his clock
We both will end up with scars
What can you do
What do you do

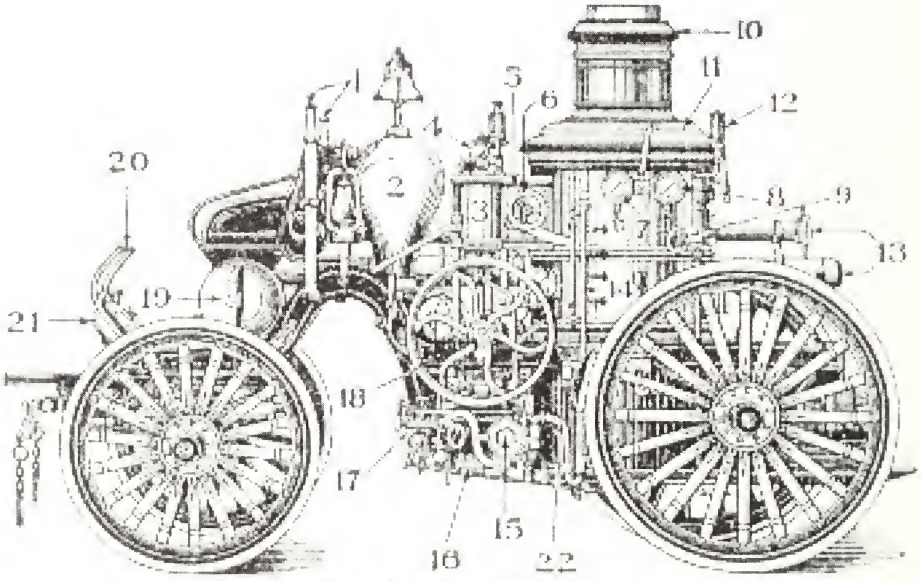
Don't wanna see my boy
Grow to retrace my steps
That regress in bad habits
Of flipping through
The ten cracks commandments
Of my religion
Hearing the streets call my name
Calling me
Calling me back like crack did pookie on New Jack
Blinding it is
To see me be the poison
That poisons my brother's mother
Wishing my eyes could no longer
See what I never did
And get on the journey
Of a return to life
In between the scribes
I give to you my son
Liberation
The gift for word
Where the end is the beginning for…
The best of being black has yet to be

Ma

Nathan Stone

Don't procrastinate; don't do drugs;
Rap it up;
Think smart and you'll be smart; speak up;
Don't sell yourself short;
Rap it up;
Stop moving so slow; wake up
Don't let no one put they hands on you;
Do what your mind tells you to do;
Rap it up;
Don't cry in front of anyone, except me,
Cause I'm your motha;
Be about your business;
Don't follow anyone;
Call your brother; see how he's doing;
Did you do your homework, are you sure?
You have KP duty tonight mister!
Run and go get me some cigarettes,
But this ain't enough;
Make it enough
Don't be late, it's better to be early;
I don't care who you end up with, just make sure she's smart;
Rap it up;
Be kind, don't second guess yourself;
Say thank you; don't roll your eyes at me!
Control your anger;
Turn to channel 4 so I can catch the number;
Damn!
Alright, you can turn it back now;
I'm on the phone!
I need the phone!
Get off the phone!
Respect my house.

IV. DRIVING FORCES



Fire Engine, p. 819.

I Believe

Kaleena Strelecki

I believe in sleeping with a blanket and never being too old for it. I love my blanket and no one can take it away.

Kids would tease me all the time, by saying there's Kaleena with her big green sheet. But I didn't care. I loved my blanket. Growing up my mom said I brought that blanket everywhere. One day at a friend's house a guy named Nikki took the blanket away from me and said, "If you want this sheet back you have to say Nikki." I was good at talking by now, so I just said Nikki and ever since that day that's been the name of my blanket. I'm very proud to have a big green sheet named Nikki as my security blanket.

I believe in always feeling safe and comfortable where I sleep and everywhere I go my Nikki will go as well. No matter how old I am, I will always have my blanket. My boyfriend even likes my Nikki. When he sleep over, he always steals it from me when we're sleeping and I don't mind because he doesn't laugh at me.

I believe in sleeping with a blanket and I will never let go of Nikki until it's coming apart into little pieces. I'm hoping that maybe my blanket will last long enough for me to one day pass it on to a child of my own. Not anytime soon so I might just need to buy a new one.

A Single Grain of Sand

Tekia Moore

Silence is deafening
The feeling of alone
Noiselessness may seem a blessing
Until you live in a world of no sound
But you don't need lack of sound
To still feel alone
In the midst of friends
Still a single stone
Through the swirl of voices
You need an escape
The loneliness and silence
A part of you they take
Yet they don't notice anything wrong
So young and oblivious
You need to vent your rage
In this world of nothingness
No one to talk to
No on to understand
Only to trust yourself
This single grain of sand

An Angry Giant

Shatia Roberts

On one Friday night,
I was sound asleep
Like a hibernating bear.
When a roar of thunder, so fierce
Shook me from my pleasant dreams
Like a belch that arises from a giant's gut.
When a gust of wind, so fierce
Shook me from my pleasant dreams
Like a giant blowing out a fire.
When a sheet of rain, so fierce
Shook me from my pleasant dreams
Like a giant spitting out angry words.
A new born baby
Afraid of the big, bad boisterous man-
Was I at that time.
The crazed giant ranted and raved
Crashed and trashed through my little town
Without considering anyone else
In his search for revenge.
My little white house and I
Trembled with fear,
On that rainy night.

Hello?

Megan Conlon

I live in a tall brown house with white trimming. There is a well in the front yard, flowers lay on the perimeter, and grass always stays green. Behind these closed doors things are never what they seem.

Have you ever been scared to open the front door of your own home?

12pm

Knock knock

Chills go down my back. My stomach drops. Everything that was good, everything I could think of was gone at that sound. My life, my future, my family is all at risk.

Knock knock

There it is again who is it? Who would want to come here? My friends? No, I can't have any one over here. Grandma? No, she just walks in and it's too late anyways. Could it be the police? Was there a complaint made against my house? Was there an accident? It couldn't be that I didn't hear any noise. Who is here? They can't come in. they can't see the mess. They can't see how we live. This isn't who I am, at least I hope not. I don't want to live like this another day. Living through the years of emotions taken out on the house, the anger, hurt, through the boredom and the fights and the laziness of some.

They can't see the dirt on the floor with the mail that people walk over and on. They can't see the random dirty clothes on the floor. What about the dishes that seem to pack up higher by the hour filled with left over food that someone didn't eat. The messes that people leave for days not caring about the afterwards. Please don't let them see in.

The car doesn't look familiar. Remember don't open the door too wide so that people can see in. Hide me hide.

Knock knock

Breathe

One… Two… Three… I open the door

"Hello?"

"Hi I'm here to collect the money for your paper" he said. It was the little 12 year old paper boy who is just doing his rounds with his mom who was driving.

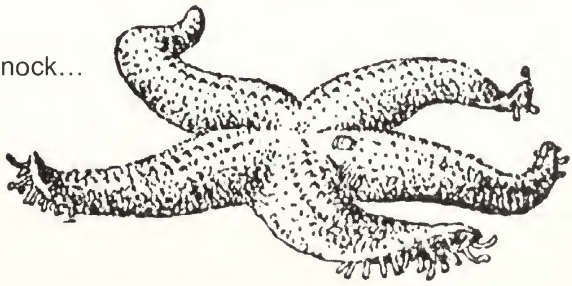
"Okay hold on"

I closed the door and yelled "mom the paper boy is here." I told myself I could breathe once the little boy was gone. Breathe. I never wanted to be part of my house, yet it consumed me. It defined me. It ran my life instead of me running my home. I am left here feeling trapped where no one can come in and I can never leave. I stay in here for hours upon hours with nothing to do, except live in the filth that I call home. I want to leave but I am terrified that my problems will follow.

What if I can't escape? Am I as dirty as my house? Will I forever be compared to how I live in this house with a constant fear of being ripped out and torn apart from my parents and two sisters. It could happen and I just have to wait and listen for the door.

I sit at home waiting to hear the sound. The sound that will change my life forever.

Knock knock…



Someone's at the door.

What a Feeling

Zandra Bogar

I cannot remember the exact day when I first watched it, or even the exact year for that matter. You could often catch me walking around my house, singing the lyrics to the theme song and breaking into random dance moves from the movie. "What a feeling! Bein's believin'" constantly plays in my head, and it seems some days that it never ends. That is pretty much all of the song that I can remember. When it plays in my head, it is usually followed by some humming to the tune of it, and then a random "Take your passion, and make it happen" follows. The humming is usually then followed by dance moves straight out of the movie. All that I know is that I was hooked from the first time I watched Flashdance.

It was not so much the music and the elaborate dance routines in the movie that caught my attention. It was not the 80s style clothing, the ripped-up sweatshirts, hanging off one shoulder and those legwarmers or even the story line. It was much more than that. It was the message: follow your dreams no matter what, and do not let anything get you down. The main character, Alex, works as a welder by day and an exotic dancer by night. Her main dream, though, is to become a ballet dancer. I admire her because she worked both of these jobs to support herself, since she was not very well off. Even working long hours, she still practices her dancing at home in hopes of following her dream. She finds that with encouragement from the ones she loves and self-motivation, she was able to fulfill her dream.

From a very young age, I knew what I wanted to be when I grew up. There was no doubt in my mind. I remember my grandmother taught me how to sew when I was six and after that, I made clothes for just about all of my stuffed animals. Piggy was my favorite stuffed white pig, who looked more like a doll with a pig's head. I created a new outfit for every occasion for him and he did not mind modeling them to my family. As I grew older, the passion I felt about clothing and sewing did not change. I knew that I was going to do whatever it took to follow my dreams of being in the fashion industry.

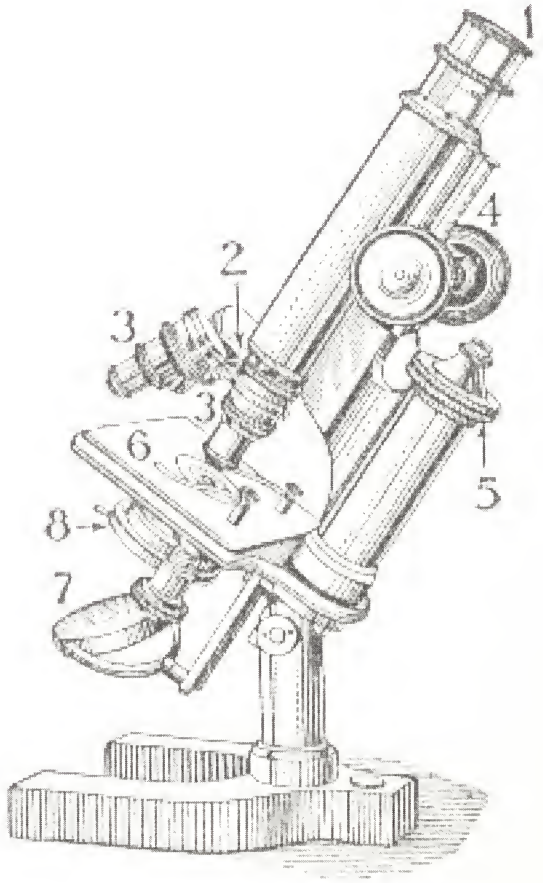
I had started proceeding towards my goal in high school by taking a fashion class every year I was there. I used the sewing skills I learned to produce many items including an A-line skirt, pajama pants, button-up collared shirts, and even a toaster oven cover. While I worked, I had the soundtrack to Flashdance playing as inspiration. My teacher, Mrs. Azzone, was very encouraging and is one of the reasons that I decided not to give up on my dreams. There were times when I was so frustrated that my sewing came out horribly. I was working on a pair of pants after school and I guess I got distracted by the Flashdance music. I realized that for the past hour and a half, I had been sewing the wrong sides of the pants together. The pants were ruined because it was made from fabric that tore each time I tried to take the stitching out. During those times, I thought about giving up and abandoning the dream that I have held since my childhood. With Mrs. Azzone and Irene Cara's kind words of encouragement, I found the strength to continue.

In the movie, Alex finally finds the courage and strength to audition for ballet school, to try to achieve her goal of being a ballet dancer. Like Alex, I got past my frustration with strength and during my senior year of high school, I was able to make my own prom dress, which I wore to senior prom. That took a lot of determination and hard work, and there were times when I broke down crying because I was so frustrated with myself. Even when I completely ruined the zipper and had to take it out to do it all over again just a few days before prom, I knew I could not give up. The moment that I walked into prom with my date, I felt like I had accomplished something so great. My friends and classmates came over to congratulate me on my finished garment. I spent the night spinning around to the music, with everyone admiring my hard work.

In the movie, Nick, Alex's boss and love interest, tells Alex at one point, "When you give up your dreams, you die." Without having dreams and something to look forward to, what would you do with your life? It would be like living life without having a purpose, and I know how much life would be a bore.

"What a feeling!"

V. PERSPECTIVES



Here Today, Gone Tomorrow

Jennifer Dauphinais-Wolak

Global warming has devastating effects on the environment and is influenced by human activity. Who would have thought the things we do in our everyday lives would affect the world in which we live? The world is an amazing gift from the universe and its citizens do not realize the magnitude of the effects of their daily behavior. Our wonderful world that has provided us a safe place to call home is wilting away.

Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that traps heat within the atmosphere, causing significant changes in climate. Although carbon dioxide is a natural gas occurring in our atmosphere, the high levels admitted into the atmosphere are playing a prominent role in the greenhouse effect. Our agriculture and automobiles are major producers of carbon dioxide and we need to be aware of the effects of our actions. A deeper understanding of what our actions mean for our planet Earth is vital for saving our home. Without this understanding, future generations will pay the consequences.

Agriculture is the origin of civilization. Corn is the foundation of our food system, as well as our livestock. In the early 1900's, America's food came from small biologically diverse family farms that relied on animals to make the farm efficient, so back then agricultural pollution was as big of an issue as it is today. Now, things have changed considerably. Demand for livestock and corn increased, the agricultural industry has evolved from a biologically diverse system farm into a factory farm system. In 1909, Fritz Haber created chemical fertilizers with nitrogen, arguably one of, "the most important inventions of the twentieth century" (Pollan 43). By 1950, chemical fertilizers had changed the face of agriculture, allowing farmers to yield more corn per acre without depleting the soil's fertility. The "higher yield" came with a price-pollution. According to Michael Pollan, an author of Omnivore's Dilemma,

> when humankind acquired the power to fix nitrogen, the basis of soil fertility shifted from a total reliance on the energy of the sun to a new reliance on fossil fuel. When you add together the natural gas in the fertilizer to the fossil fuels it takes to make the pesticides, drive the tractors, and harvest, dry, and transport the corn, you find that every bushel of industrial corn requires the equivalent of between a quarter and a third of a gallon of oil to grow it-or around fifty gallons of oil per acre of corn (Pollan, 45).

The abundance of corn has made the market price rather inexpensive, in turn making it more cost-efficient to feed livestock. The corn fattens up the cattle, which makes them ready for slaughter in a fraction of the time that it would have taken had they been eating grass. Industrialized feeding lots that the cattle are now raised in over-feed them. In its short life span, a steer will consume roughly twenty-five pounds of corn a day. When you do the calculations, a steer will have consumed nearly a barrel of oil in its lifetime. It is frightening to think that the production of our food source requires such large quantities of oil. We need to make changes in this production process, or future generations will reap the consequences.

A study done by the Bureau of Transportation found that 32 percent of the U.S. carbon emissions were due to transportation. Today many Americans own SUV's. SUV's and many other popular automobiles consume high amounts of fossil fuel. Not enough people have realized what our "gas-guzzling" automobiles are doing to our planet. If the government made it mandatory to have an emissions-conversion kit on these types of vehicles, it would significantly reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. More people should think about the new technology on the market such as hybrid cars, which significantly decrease carbon emissions. Fuel-efficient automobiles are being introduced to the market and are an ethical choice for making a difference.

Our climate is changing; there is no denying it. The effects of our way of life are already showing devastating results according to various scientific studies around the globe. Many people would like to deny global warming as just a theory, but you cannot deny the facts. In 1958, a scientist by the name of Roger Reville developed a method of measuring the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Reville's findings determined the continuous rise of carbon levels have reached an all time dangerous high for our atmosphere. Numerous other studies show that carbon dioxide is causing the rise in temperatures. When temperatures rise, glaciers and permafrost melt around the world. If all of Greenland's glaciers melt, the sea level will rise 20 feet. This will have devastating consequences for many countries; significant land loss will result throughout the world. As if that was not serious enough, if only half of western Antarctica melts, worldwide sea level will also rise by 20 feet. What would our world look like if the oceans rose to such extreme levels? Fiji, for example, is losing a half-foot of land every year and this will continue as long as the sea levels continue to rise. If we do not make changes in our behavior,

beautiful islands like Fiji will become non-existent. On the opposite side of the globe here in the U.S, effects can be seen as well. As stated by The Union of Concerned Scientists, "marsh and island loss are occurring as the sea level is rising at three times the historical rate in Chesapeake Bay." Changes need to be made or life as we know it may be quite different.

Another result of global warming is an increase in natural disasters. Our actions have been gradually killing mother earth. Climate change is causing downpours in some areas and extreme droughts in others. When surface temperatures rise, moisture evaporates from the soil, causing droughts. Lakes are drying up, and people are losing their source of fresh water. In Pakistan, an unusually long drought lasted two years; over 2.2 million people were affected by this unfortunate disaster. A similar event happened in Iran, in which "an extreme drought dried up 90 percent of the wetlands in 2001" (climatehotmap.org). Devastation and destruction due to climate change comes with many faces. Vicious storms are becoming all too common. As ocean temperatures rise, low-scaled hurricanes turn into deadly killing machines.

Al Gore stated in his documentary An Inconvenient Truth, "this is not a political issue, it is a moral issue. If we allow that to happen it is deeply unethical." The U.S. government is trying to make excuses for postponing change because of the effects change will have on our economy; but if we no longer have a planet how important is the economy? This climate dilemma affects everyone, and everyone has had a part in creating the problem. "We think because the earth is so big that we can't possibly have a lasting impact on the earth's environment" (Gore). If everyone took a stance on improving our environment, together we can make a difference. We owe it our future generations to provide them with a safe, healthy environment. We must all do our best to preserve our earth and pave the road for a recovery of the planet. What would our world be if our ancestors had not tried to make a difference? We would not have our freedom, our rights, or this beautiful nation. Our ancestors fought for us and we must unite and fight for our civilization's future. We can start by saving energy, recycling, using more public transportation, choosing a fuel-efficient automobile, or even planting a tree. One step at a time we will improve our environment and make a difference. "Each one of us is a cause of Global Warming and each one of us has the will to change" (Gore). Through this article I hope to have reached the lives of many who will challenge their pre-held assumptions and spread the word to make a difference. Do it for your children and your grandchildren. Do it for humanity.

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Fear and Claustrophobia in Paris

Melissa Thompson

We get in this little box; it's mostly glass with iron framework in a ridiculous bright yellow or orange. Squashed together with my fellow travelers we crane out necks looking out the glass. I'm pressed close against one of the sides so I've got a pretty good view of our assent. We rise higher and higher, my heart starts pounding, my hands start sweating; I can't stand to look out the window anymore. Instead, I look at the faces of my companions. I see awe on them all. No way does that tempt me to look back out the window. I'm good looking anywhere else. But this contraption is made almost entirely of glass so I can still see the skyline; I can tell we're crazy high up. I focused on the shirt of the old guy in front of me and pray we're almost there. Finally, we reach the top and spill out of our box. At first I'm relieved. Then it dawns on me. I'm standing hundreds of feet off the ground in a mess of iron and it's swaying in the wind. Couldn't we have just looked at the Eiffel Tower from the safety of the ground?

126. Le papillon voltige.

21st Century Negro

Jamie Strickland

The 21st Century Negro
A freedom upon escape
Laid within this cosmic groove
Of lullabies troubles
Filled
With the spirit of liberation
In connotations
Of a boy with a ball is a man with a plan
Where the skies the limit
Keeping ya head above water
And
And
And
Living in fear where ya vision is clouded
With cash cars hoes
I quit running
Knowing they're only inches behind
Divine is my culture
So I thought to myself
Trying to not compromise M in E
Gaining momentum
To be inspired
By the C
Dividing my culture
The black without C
That gives the U in all
Distinguished individuals we all are
Of broken homes
Broken bones
Shooting up stones
As silent as pin drops
Put your hand down youngin
I'm not amused

And you're not confused
By the cushion to the seed of your soul
Real shit coming to light
Glory to god
Glory to allah
In the name of the ghetto superstar
Burned out
Silenced for
l-o-v-e
Air gasping
Choked by danger
Trapped in the

Boundaries of the northern
Aphrodisiac mixed with a little cognac
Surrounded by a devotion
To commotions
Word to mother
Other time
Please
Freeze
Rose
Respect self
Or merit of heritage

Fate Doesn't Exist

David Barakchian

Fate is merely an excuse for inaction and a false hope for people not to worry about the outcome of their life. There are no immutable and potent laws of Fate. There are only immutable and potent laws of causality and the will of others. If I wanted to abandon a newborn baby in the woods to see if its fate was to live would you let me? No, because the outcome of your life is not predetermined, but is a product of self actions and other actions. The laws of cause and effect are the hands that mold the clay of our lives. If I were to sit on my couch watching television all day expecting to get a job, I would never get a job and tell myself its my fate to be unemployed. But if I were to get out of my house and submit applications or do an internship, my chances would be higher. The same goes for girls.

Last year as a junior in high school, I stayed home and played video games all year. I didn't really go out of my way to expose myself to girls, and for some reason girls didn't knock on my front door and say "Hi David, let's watch a movie resulting in us making out, etc." Then over the summer I got out more and as I exposed myself to more girls, they started saying "Hi David, let's watch a movie resulting in us making out, etc" in more or less words. This is causality. The cause of the problem was lack of exposure to girls and overexpose to Warcraft. And the effect was lack of physical female activities. Not to say I had no female physical interactions, but I wasn't getting stalked by Jenna Jameson. The solution was less exposure to Warcraft and more exposure to females. If I sat on my couch telling myself that it's not my Fate to ever touch a girl, then I would never touch a girl, and forever be touching myself. Life is all about taking action; it's not about sitting on your ass and waiting for life to happen. Are all these decisions Fate to start with? Was it my fate to play Warcraft all year? Maybe, but if I did it for another year, would that be fate as well? What if I did it until I become a 350 pound 30 year old living in my mother's Cheeto scented basement watching Star Wars five times a day on my computer with a lifetime prescription to playboy.com? But maybe if I continue working toward a career year after year, I will be a 30 year old millionaire cruising the Mediterranean taking shots of jagermiester out off the belly button of a playboy bunny while watching Star Wars on a 60 inch HD TV. Both are possible. And both depend on my actions. Both results are dependant on a cause, and the cause comes back to me. Any effect comes back to the person. I could go to the city every weekend and spend some of my

hard earned money on a fine, young dignified, body retailer. But it would be naïve for me to claim fate after I am diagnosed with HIV.

The outcome of your life also depends on the will of others. You will not get a promotion at work unless your bosses like you. Social Darwinism is cause and effect. If you work in an office and refer to your female co-workers as bitches and hoes, you won't go as far as calling them by their first name. As much as I want to fight someone, I must think about the repercussions. I must make sure my will and physical ability to win the fight is stronger than the other person's will and physical ability to win the fight. A Chinese midget can kill a 350 pound football player with the right training. If the guy I decide to fight wants to beat the crap out of me more than I want to beat the crap out of him, then I will get my ass kicked. Its how the world works. It often only comes down to your will against another person's will. For anyone that believes in Fate, I challenge them to sit on their couch watching television for the rest of their life. If they do that I can predict Fate. I would predict that in three months the cable would be shut off for lack of payment and eventually the house and couch would be repossessed. And good luck finding a girl without a house and a couch to host the girl on. Everything is about action. Every event is based on a prior action, nothing is predetermined and people that think it's all predetermined don't want to think about their lives. Life is what you make of it, not what it makes of you.

Untitled, N. McConvery

Redeemer

Roberto Zerbino

We, I, us, marched foreword across the patched landscape of a once, used to be, land. The trees resembled the sick twisted skeletons of tormented bodies. The morbid smell of rotting land, a rotting person, an enemy, a friend, a mother, a father, a son, a daughter. Who was I to label those who lay, stripped of a life on the crimson sea of blood surrounding me. Laid waste to the vultures, ghoulishly laughing as they circled above. The skies a hollow grey. No distinguished clouds. The once promising warmth of the sun imprisoned by an armored march of darkness.

The heckling of the vultures ceased. Quietness having a numbing effect on my body. The blanket of uncertainty tainting the mind set of sanity. And then it happens. It happens when the human finger pulls on the trigger of a gun. The chamber slides over the hammer nails the slender, metal cylinder that incased absolution, now freeing… Unleashing, death, reincarnate. sailing the cold air like, a ballerina leaping across an abandoned lifeless lot. And quickly separating the skin of its target, crushing something that could once smile, that could once love, that could once live. And like an erupting geyser, was a spray of blood causing an eternity of panic to everyone surrounding him. I fell handicapped to fear. I watched as his eyes had widened on the impact of the bullet. His mouth slowly fell open. As his knees hit the floor, out came a flow of blood from his mouth like spilling wine, teeming off the edge of a table.

My distraction of this imagery quickly halted by the screaming of our leader, "Medic, we've been hit" Those words pillaged any thoughts of happiness that I may have had left. The expectations of having children, seeing my family or friends, all outcast from my head. Escaping my sight like a speeding plane heading towards the horizon. I watched those around me fall to the floor for refuge. Their eyes forced shut, the ground convulsed, as the mortar shells tore apart whatever grounds we had left to walk on. The dirt kicked up from the impact, plagued and singed our eyes.

I fell to the floor, I looked behind me, and saw men running for their dear lives, running for the hope of escaping this unbiased hate that has consumed all that a man could offer. I cried out, "Don't turn we need you;" again, and again… My voice was nothing but a mere whisper amongst

the prayers, the pleas, and the screaming of those around me. I stared until all I could see were dark figures hasting away from the hail of death that lashed its malice causing a nauseating explosion of angst. Which heaved our sights to the living. To grasp and reach those who still had a heartbeat. In the quick reflex of my eyes closing, to refresh the lens that could capture nothing but images of disparity. The men who were once alive and breathing next to me, annihilated, as the curtain of fleeting bullets tore their way into their bodies.

I looked to my left and saw my chaplain, his face shrouded with agony. All he could do was whisper. His lips flapping like blankets through a spring's breeze. His once honorable, collective eminence, fractured by the perseverance of anguish. His last words to me echoing, and reverberating back in forth through my skull "I'll have you know. This war will not be won without fire, without love, or without a fight" those words palpitated like an overworked heart, with only but limited fight left, and as quickly as those words unraveled in my mind, they dismantled into nothingness. I thought, what is a fight with love? It's the slit of your throat leaving you nothing but the promise of death. It's the horrifying voice that whispers to you when the inevitability of death brushes up behind you and its cold grasp clenches your soul and mutilates your entire purpose of being. It's the hollow path we take when making an oath to never let go of what we hold dear. I saw as the emblem of faith and love was bathed in blood as the chaplain's callused hands gripped the cross, his grip was a metaphor for the last grip on reality before all of what we have dissipates into an oblivion of lost thoughts, and mis-tempered causes. A pool of people with so much to offer, so much life left to give off. All of us in the end of this war, will end up dead, will end up in coffins, will end up forgotten. Nothing more but a number being rounded off on a death toll. So people back home can moan, and gasp, at those numbers…The numbers… not us. Not the dead and dying.

I lay there watching my comrades die. One gets up. One falls…One gets up…One falls, like a sick game of musical chairs. My ears slowly deafened. I heard the blunt tapping of bullets hitting the ground around me. I knew my time had come. My time to let go of my selfishness for life. Time to let go of my aspirations, the dreams I had as a child. The image of me as a kid running through my head like an old movie wheel. My mom standing next to me as I played on the swings. My dad's voice massaging my head clear of all my pain. And now I slowly fade… I feel relaxed. I feel calm. My body is shaking as the metal of enemy fire frees

the blood inside of me. I have a final thought. One last thing I can bring to reality before I pass. A fight without love…is a fight lost. It's a fight of prejudice, an unjust cause… which is funny…because a fight with love, is having hate with compassion…compassion…compassion.

"I now had an explosive image of what life, and my country is about…and it's blowing out of my head."

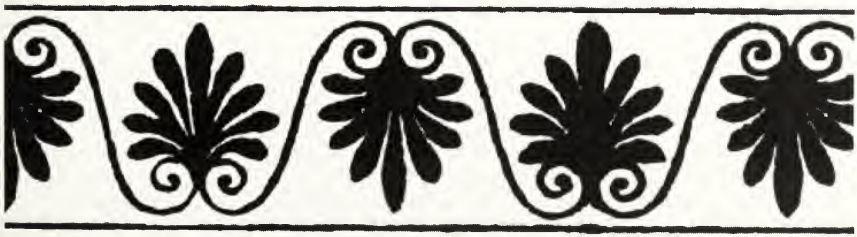
Untitled, N. McConvery

Chicks vs. Women

Karlah Murphy

What is a "chick," you ask? Well normally, it means a chicken, but in today's world we associate chick with a girl or woman. Now what makes a girl a chick is that she lacks the maturity level to fit the status quo of being a lady in society. A woman is described as a person who serves and acts with repentance towards other women and men, a thing that a chick wouldn't do. A chick does as she pleases and doesn't mind being called a chick, but to some women it is degrading to know that someone would call you a chick.

In today's world some women don't follow "the old ways." Yet in some countries women have to hold themselves in a dignified manner or they will be looked upon as committing a crime and may also be excluded from the religion or family. In America though, the worst thing that could happen if a woman doesn't act like a lady, is to be called a name such as "chick." It has now become sort of the norm to call an unrefined woman a chick. Some women do not know or want to know the norms of refined behavior such as: sitting straight, crossing the legs, dressing appropriately, no swearing, etc. Word choice does have an effect on how someone views you. So, it is more of do you want to call yourself a chicken, or call yourself a woman?



Untitled

Alex Leptourgos

School in Queens. Excited as I was to move on up to the first grade and become a "big" kid, I first had to accomplish one last thing before I graduated from kindergarten. My class was set up to do a dance of some sort as a final statement before our departure. So there I was. Before I knew it, my whole class was on stage, all in the spotlight. The flashes of cameras irritated me, and I didn't enjoy being blind for that amount of time. I remember the one annoying light from someone's camcorder and wanting to brutally extinguish it with my foot. Finally, after what seemed like hours, the lights dimmed and the auditorium became dark. The stage was lit up, however. "What was I doing here?" I thought. Before I could answer myself, the music began. My classmates started moving, trying to dance to the beat. Trying to make sense of all of this, all I could get myself to do was to put my fingers in my mouth. They remained there until the song was over. I must have been in the spotlight.

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